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Two Poems

William S. Barnes

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WILLIAM S. BARNES

Ephemeroptera

all congeries to a play, *this* — the bell rings four
you say: *at first...*

the slope of its waters
a city of birds

the light slant to its roofs, of the dusk
of the windows lifting at the shores of leaves

of the turbulent canopies of air
arise, to the surfaces, for the stillness in the eddies, to hold

emissary

as the men in their blankets sleep for the lawns
slate to the ringing

banks of grass, forest of lights —

for the language of water
the smoke and the opal

diaphany — elegy — of wings
clouded, rising

The Clinging

Monday, June 3rd 1805. Capt. C. & myself strolled out to the top of the hights in the fork of the these rivers from whence we had an extensive and most enchanting view —

*in the hour prelude and blue —
they lean to the joining — expanse —*

*of the tribes of grass —
each blade suffused with light — naming —*

the country in every derection was one vast plain in which innumerable herds of Buffalow were seen attended by their shepperds the wolves; the solatary antelope which

now had their young were distributed over its face; herds of Elk were also seen —

*Mountain muhly — tall, glabrous, the color of jade — waking —
ligule fine acuminate —*

verdure perfectly cloathed the ground — the direction of the rivers could be seen but little way, soon loosing the break of their channels, to our view, in the common plain.

*Pine dropseed — narrow-leaved — unfurling at the waist —
pouring — to the ridgelines, to the water light —*

Thursday, June 20th 1805. The Mountains to the N.W. and West of us are still entirely covered, are white and glitter with the reflection of the sun. There has been no

proceptable diminution of the snow since we first saw them.

*Idaho fescue — tufted, shy-limned — emerald and blonde — Arizona fescue
— scabrous and raucous and flocked —*

Thurber's fescue — folded, erect, the color of spruce, a glacial till —
the pathway twisted — and rising —

*Saturday, July 27th 1805. We begin to feel considerable anxiety — we are now several
hundred miles within the bosom of this wild and mountainous country — without any
information — not knowing how far these mountains continue — or wher to direct
our course —*

Slender wheatgrass — stiff, ascending, scarious, evenly lined,
auricled, blue-hued — the cloudlight —

Parry's oatgrass — long-tapered, densely gathered, spilling — wheaten
— in tides bent or kneeling — into —

Sweetgrass — wide flexuous blades, glossy-backed — the color
of rush — in braids — redolent —

radiant, folded, scabrous — *Tufted hairgrass* — ligule long-acute —
membranous — the wind —

*Monday, August 12th 1805. After refreshing ourselves we proceeded
to the top of the dividing ridge from which I discovered*

*immence ranges of high mountains still to the West of us —
their tops covered with snow —*

*a luminous thing must have within itself — always, deeply grooved —
that which perseveres — Junegrass — the dawnlight — walking in —*